

# Rare Mammal Observations 2004

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## **Abstract**

Reports were received for 12 observations of 15 marten, 1 observation of 1 wolverine, 8 observations of 9 lynx, 64 observations of 71 cougar, and 15 observations of 16 moose. One radiocollared moose was monitored in Wisconsin. Three observations of moose in Douglas County were the first reported from that county since 2000.

## **Methods**

Observations were collected of rare mammals including timber wolf (*Canis lupus*), American marten (*Martes americana*), wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*), cougar (*Puma concolor*), and moose (*Alces alces*). These observations were collected from agency field personnel or members of the general public in 2004. Observations of rare mammals were reported on a "Rare Mammal Observation Card" (Figure 1) which was sent to the DNR office in Park Falls or on the WDNR endangered mammal website (<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/forms/raremammal.asp>).

All observations were classified as "probable", "possible", or "not likely". Only "probable" and "possible" observations are reported here. Moose were usually listed as probable, because they were relatively easy to accurately identify. Animals were classified as adults if they appeared to be  $\geq 1$  year old, but among carnivores, could include younger animals because adult size was achieved by 6 to 9 months. Animals less than 1 year old were called juveniles, and this included moose calves.

This report does not include tracks of Rare Mammals found on Winter Track Counts, which are reported in the August issue of Wisconsin Wildlife Surveys (Dhuey 2004). Wolf observations are not included in this report, and are also published in the August issue of Wisconsin Wildlife Surveys (Wydeven and Wiedenhoef 2004).

## **Results & Discussion**

Twelve marten observations of 15 marten were reported during 2004 (Table 1). Observations were received from 7 counties. Most were within the two known marten distribution areas (Figure 2).

One possible observation of an adult wolverine was received from Sauk County (Table 2, Figure 2). The report could not be verified.

Five reports of lynx observations and 3 reports of lynx tracks were received in 2004 (Table 3). Most reports were from northern Wisconsin (Figure 3). One report from LaCrosse County was possibly a misidentification. A DNR tracker reported tracks of 2 lynx in Vilas County in late March. More intense attempts to locate lynx in the area were unsuccessful.

Two visual observations of cougar were reported that were classified as probable (Table 4). Both were in Lincoln County near Tomahawk about 15 miles apart. The 2 reports were within a 2-week time period in late August to early September. Both reports were of a tan animal with a

tail as long as its body. One other report, classified as possible, was received from the Tomahawk area later in September.

Sixty-four observations were made of 71 cougars across Wisconsin that were classified as possible or probable (Table 5). Cougar reports occurred throughout the state (Figure 3). Many could be mistaken identifications but could not be discounted based on the information reported. Highest observation rates were for Bayfield (8), Oconto (5), Oneida (5), and Washburn (4) counties. Of the 8 reports from Bayfield County, 4 were of a black cougar near Red Cliff in April and May. Three additional reports were of a cougar near Iron River in October and November.

Fifteen observations of 16 moose were received in 2004 (Table 6). Number of reports was up from last year when 9 reports of 12 moose were received (Wydeven & Wiedenhoef, 2004), but still down from 2002 (21 reported observations) (Wydeven & Wiedenhoef, 2003) and 2001 (53 reported observations) (Wydeven & Wiedenhoef, 2002). Moose reports were received from 6 counties (Figure 4). Highest report rate was from Vilas County (4). Three observations from Douglas County were the first observations from that county since 2000. They most likely were moose that entered the state from Minnesota. In recent years, observations from northeast Wisconsin are assumed to be moose entering the state from Michigan. One such moose, radiocollared female moose 5155 "Natassia", continued to reside in Forest County throughout 2004. All 3 reports from Forest County were of a collared female moose and most likely were observations of moose 5155. There were no reports of juveniles or calves in Wisconsin in 2004 and it is uncertain whether any moose reproduced in the state in 2004.

### **Literature Cited**

- Dhuey, B. 2004. Winter Track Counts, 1977-2004. Wisconsin Wildlife Surveys, August 2004. 14 (5) :104-109.
- Wydeven, A.P. and J.E. Wiedenhoef. 2002. Rare Mammal Observations 2001. Wisconsin Wildlife Surveys, April 2002. 12(2):46-52.
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- Wydeven, A.P. and J.E. Wiedenhoef. 2004. Rare Mammal Observations 2003. Wisconsin Wildlife Surveys, April 2004. 14(2):66-74.
- Wydeven, A. P. and J. E. Wiedenhoef. 2004. Gray wolf population, 2003-2004. Wisconsin Wildlife Surveys, August 2004. 14 (5): 125- 138.

**Figure 1.** *Rare mammal observation card.*

Rare Mammal Observation Card	
(Use for Timber Wolf, Cougar, Lynx, Moose & Marten)	
<b><u>Observer:</u></b>	<b><u>Description of Animal:</u></b>
Name_____	Estimated Size_____
Address_____	Tail Length (stub, 1/4 body, 1/2 body, long as body):_____
Phone( )_____	Track Size: Length_____Width_____
Observers Background:_____	Coloration_____
No. & Species_____	Other Descriptions_____
Sex_____Adult_____Young_____	Photo Taken_____
<b><u>Location:</u></b> GPS_____ / _____	General Comments_____
Sec_____Twn_____Range_____	_____
County_____	_____
Road & Nearest Town_____	_____
Habitat_____	Reviewed by_____
Date & Time_____	Agency_____Phone( )_____
	Code: PB PS NL

**Table 1.** *Reported possible and probable observations of American marten in Wisconsin in 2004.*

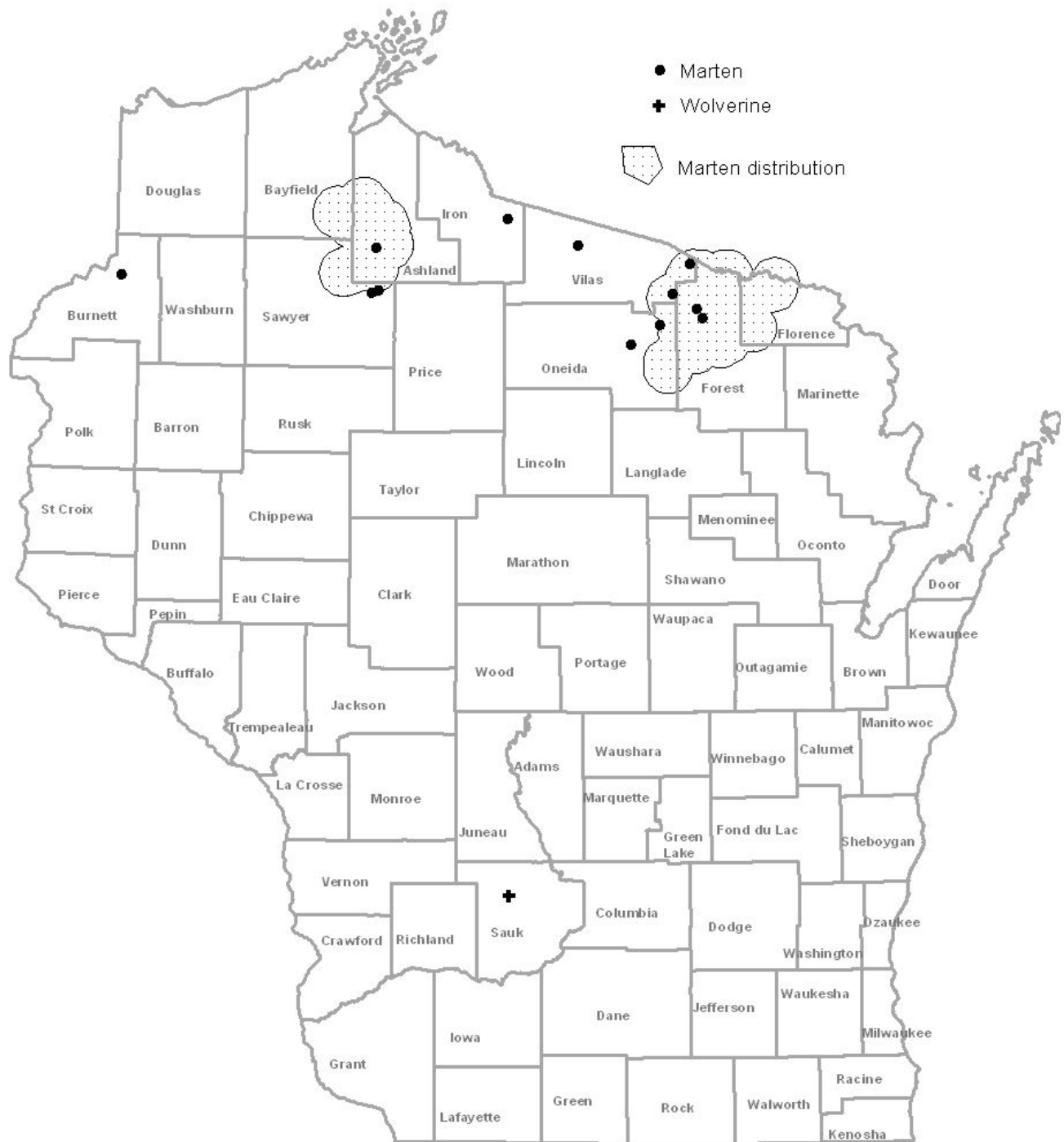
Date	Number seen	Number tracks	Sec	Township	Range	County	Nearest Town	Agency <sup>1</sup>
6/26	1	-	11	41N	12E	Vilas	Phelps	Private
7/26	1	-	13	39N	12E	Forest	Alvin	Private
7/27	1	-	5	38N	11E	Oneida	Three Lakes	Private
7/27	1	-	24	40N	11E	Vilas	Eagle River	Private
8/12	1	-	29	39N	13E	Forest	Long Lake	USFS
10/15	1	-	18	42N	3W	Ashland	Clam Lake	DNR?
10/16	1	-	17	40N	3W	Sawyer	Draper	Private
10/16	1	-	24	40N	4W	Sawyer	Draper	Private
10/25	1	-	32	41N	15W	Burnett	Danbury	Private
11/?	4	-	5	43N	4E	Iron	Mercer	Private
11/18	1	-	1?	37N	9E	Oneida	Rhineland	Private
11/20	1	-	10	42N	7E	Vilas	Boulder Junction	Private

<sup>1</sup>Agency for whom observer works

**Table 2.** *Reported possible and probable observations of wolverine in Wisconsin in 2004.*

Date	Number seen	Number tracks	Sec	Township	Range	County	Nearest Town	Agency <sup>1</sup>
10/5	1A	-	?	12N	4E	Sauk	Reedsburg	Private

<sup>1</sup>Agency for whom observer works



**Figure 2.** *Reported possible and probable marten and wolverine observations in Wisconsin during 2004.*

\*Marten distribution from: Woodford, Jim. 2005. Summary Report State Wildlife Grants Program - Inventory, Status, and Management Needs of American Marten in Wisconsin. Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources. Rhinelander, WI. 10 pp.

**Table 3.** *Reported possible and probable observations of lynx in Wisconsin in 2004.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Number seen</b>	<b>Number tracks</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Nearest Town</b>	<b>Agency<sup>1</sup></b>
01/15	1		6	45N	14W	Douglas	Chaffey	Private
03/04		1	23	48N	7W	Bayfield	Ino	Northland Coll.
03/22		2	35	42N	10E	Vilas	Conover	DNR
11/04	1		?	40N?	14E?	Forest	Tipler	Private
11/14	1		?	15N	7W	La Crosse	La Crosse	Private
11/20	1		?	40N	9E	Vilas	St. Germain	Private
11/21	1		?	37N	19E	Marinette	Dunbar	Private
12/13		1	22	34N	2E	Price	Ogema	Private

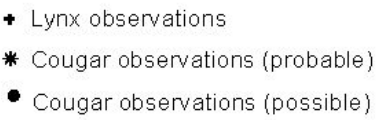
<sup>1</sup>Agency for whom observer works**Table 4.** *Reported probable visual observations of cougars in Wisconsin in 2004.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Number sighted</b>	<b>Sec</b>	<b>Township</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Nearest Town</b>	<b>Color</b>	<b>Agency<sup>1</sup></b>
08/26	1	29	35N	6E	Lincoln	Tomahawk	Tan	DNR
09/09	1	22	34N	8E	Lincoln	Tomahawk	Tan	Private

<sup>1</sup>Agency for whom observer works

**Table 5.** *Reported probable and possible observations of cougars in Wisconsin in 2004, by quarter.*

<b>County</b>	<b>Jan-Mar</b>	<b>Apr-Jun</b>	<b>Jul-Sep</b>	<b>Oct-Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Ashland		1	1	1 (report of 2)	3
Barron				1	1
Bayfield		4		4	8
Burnett	1	1			2
Calumet				1	1
Dane				1	1
Dodge	1				1
Florence			2		2
Forest				1	1
Grant	2 (1 of tracks)			1 (report of 2)	3
Iowa			1 (tracks)		1
Iron			1		1
Jefferson	1				1
Juneau				1	1
Langlade			2		2
Lincoln			3		3
Marathon			1		1
Marinette			1	2	3
Menominee			1		1
Monroe	1				1
Oconto	1 (tracks)	1	1	2	5
Oneida	2	2		1	5
Pierce	2				2
Price			1		1
Rock				1	1
Sauk				1	1
Sawyer		2 (1 report of 2)			2
St. Croix				2	2
Trempealeau			1		1
Vernon		1 (tracks)			1
Vilas			1	1	2
Walworth			1		1
Washburn		1 (report of 3)	2	1	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13 (16 animals)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22 (24 animals)</b>	<b>64 (71 animals)</b>



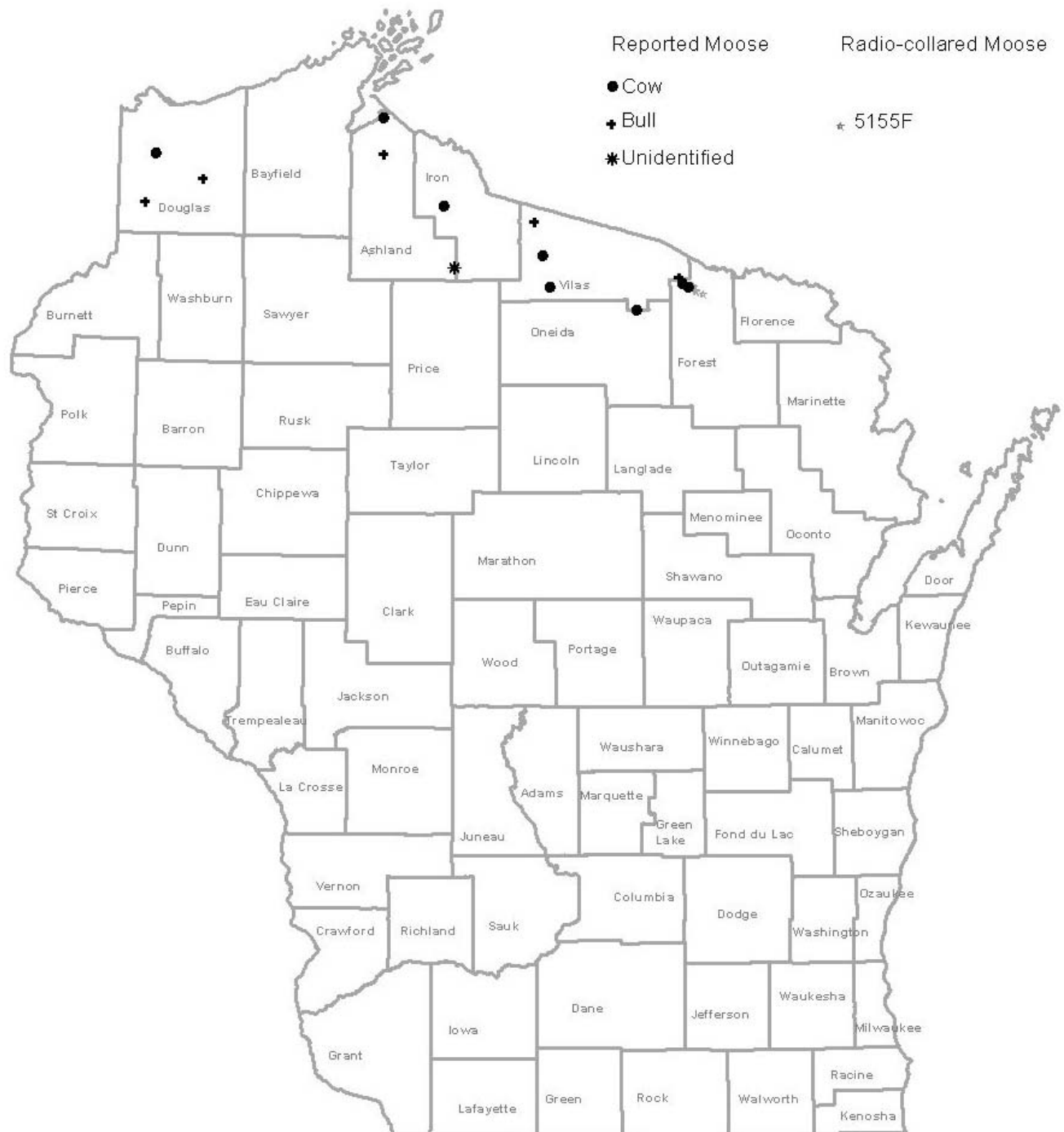
**Figure 3.** *Reported possible and probable lynx and cougar sightings in Wisconsin during 2004.*



**Table 6.** *Reported possible and probable observations of moose in Wisconsin in 2004.*

Date	Number sighted <sup>1</sup>	Tracks sighted	Sex	Township	Range	Sec	County	Nearest Town
05/28	1A		F?	42N	6E	31	Vilas	Manitowish Waters
07/01	1A		F	40N	12E	10	Forest	Eagle River
07/01	1A		F	40N	12E	10	Forest	Eagle River
08/28	1A		M	44N	14W	?	Douglas	Moose Junction
09/18	1A		M	43N	5E	11	Vilas	Presque Isle
09/19?	2A		M	46N	3W	3	Ashland	Odanah
09/19?	1A		F	48N	3W	?	Ashland	Odanah
09/24	1A		M	41N	12E	34	Vilas	Eagle River
09/25	1A		F	39N?	10E?	?	Oneida	Three Lakes
10/07	1A		M	45N	11W?	18?	Douglas	Solon Springs?
10/09	1U		F?	44N	1E	?	Iron	Upton
10/21		1U	U	41N	1E	13	Ashland	Park Falls
10/28?	1A		F	46N	14W	11	Douglas	Patzau
11/20?	1A		F	40N	12E	13	Forest	Eagle River
11/27	1A		F	40N	6E	16	Vilas	Woodruff
<div> 6 Adult M  8 Adult F  1 Unknown F  <u>1 Unknown</u>  16 Total </div> <div>6 counties</div>								

<sup>1</sup>A=Adult; J=Juvenile; U=Unknown



**Figure 4.** *Reported possible and probable moose observations and moose radiolocations in Wisconsin during 2004.*